What is claimed is:

1.   A method for representing a user within an online environment comprising the

steps of:

defining a plurality of environmental parameters for controlling user interaction;

5   defining a plurality of user representation parameters of user data within the

environment;

capturing user data from the user;

building an abstract graphical display of the environment; and

building a user representation within the abstract graphical display incorporating

10   the user data.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of defining the environmental

parameters is user controlled comprising the steps of:

determining an environmental structure; and

15   governing user interaction within the environment according to the user

parameters and the environmental structure.

3.   The method of claim 2, wherein the environmental structure is one of an auction,

a queue of users, a chat room, a conference room, a news group, an online help desk, and

20   a business interface.

4.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of defining the user

representation based on a user profile.

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5.   The method of claim 1, wherein the user data is captured from a user's device registered with a social proxy providing service.

5   6.   The method of claim 1, wherein the user data is captured from a user's activity within the online environment.

7.   The method of claim 1, wherein user data is updated periodically.

10   8.   The method of claim 1, wherein the user navigates the abstract graphical display by selecting an object to reveal information about the object.

9.   The method of claim 8, wherein the object is an element represented in the abstract graphical display, comprising associated data.

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10.   The method of claim 8, wherein the information is one of a hierarchical relationship, content of a compound data object, a zoomed view, and user information.

11.   A method for representing a social proxy in an abstract graphical display

20   comprising the steps of:

defining the social proxy for a virtual environment and facilitating user interaction;

defining a user proxy for a user, the user proxy having updatable variables;

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displaying the user proxy within abstract graphical display of the social proxy; and

updating user proxy variables periodically.

5   12.   The method of claim 11, wherein the social proxy is defined by a provider.

13.   The method of claim 11, further comprises the steps of:

defining a proxy for a provider; and

displaying the provider within the social proxy.

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14.   The method of claim 12, wherein the provider is the user.

15.   The method of claim 11, further includes the step of displaying a link to a second social proxy.

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16.   The method of claim 11, wherein the social proxy is one of a plurality of social proxies within a hierarchical system of proxies.

17.   The method of claim 11, wherein the social proxy is used interactively by the user

20   with an application, the application is an extension of the social proxy.

18.   Method of claim 11, wherein the step of displaying the user proxy, further comprises limiting data displayed based on a user's access credentials.

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19.   A computer-based medium having stored programs readable by a computer for causing the computer to execute method steps for facilitating the presentation of an environment in graphical form comprising a processor for receiving information from a plurality of users and presenting said information in a graphical form to the plurality of users, wherein the plurality of users communicate user data to the processor for incorporation in the graphical environment as user proxies.

20.   The computer-based medium according to claim 19, wherein the environment can be one of a physical environment, a virtual environment, and a combined physical and virtual environment.